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C O N F I D E N T I A L ANKARA 001415

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TAGS: [PREL](#) [TU](#) [IZ](#)

SUBJECT: TURKISH IRAQ COORDINATOR UPDATE ON TURKEY'S IRAQ  
EFFORTS; DCM URGES CONCRETE CONSTRUCTIVE STEPS

REF: STATE 22896

(U) Classified by DCM Nancy McEldowney, reasons 1.4 (b) and  
(d).

[11](#). (C) Summary: In a March 15 meeting with DCM, Turkish  
Special Representative for Iraq Oguz Celikkol outlined  
Turkey's efforts to bridge Iraq's sectarian divides by  
meeting with a wide range of interlocutors. There is still  
no firm date or any specific plans for an al-Sadr visit to  
Turkey. DCM urged Celikkol to move on aid and other material  
assistance to Iraq. End Summary.

Turkey's Efforts on Iraq  
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[12](#). (C) Celikkol said the Ministry of Religious Affairs  
(Diyanet) is planning to send a joint Sunni/Shiite cleric  
group to Iraq to calm sectarian tension; the Shiite clerics  
will likely come from Azerbaijan (Note: However, a Diyanet  
Vice President told us March 16 that there were no specific  
plans to go to Iraq. End Note). Turkey also plans to host a  
mixed Sunni/Shiite Turkmen group in the future. Celikkol  
said he had met in the past week with Osama Tawafik  
al-Tikriti of the Iraqi Islamic Party, who requested Turkish  
assistance in preventing division of Iraq and in the Party's  
media efforts. He also met with the Kurdistan Islamic Union  
Party, who complained about the lack of democracy in  
KDP-controlled areas; Celikkol urged them to talk to USG  
officials as well.

[13](#). (C) Celikkol claimed Turkey is avoiding taking sides in  
Iraq and will host whomever wishes to visit. He expressed  
concern over what he sees as deepening sectarian division in  
Iraq and said the Iraqi government should comprise all  
elements, including Moktada al-Sadr; if not, he fears the  
Sadr militias will be uncontrolled. DCM replied that the  
Sadr militias have been a deeply negative factor, noting  
reports they are behind much of the current violence.

[14](#). (C) Celikkol said there is still no firm date or specific  
plans for an al-Sadr visit to Turkey.

[15](#). (C) Noting that some planned Turkish projects and aid  
dispersal in Iraq had stalled, DCM urged Celikkol to move  
forward both on aid disbursement and on donations of supplies  
to Iraqi police and security forces (reftel). DCM pointed

out that many of the requested supplies would be easy for Turkey to donate. Celikkol undertook to approach the military, police and Turkish Cooperation Development Agency (TIKA).

¶6. (C) Celikkol said PM Jaafari and the Iraqi Minister of Transportation had both agreed on the need for more border gates between Turkey and Iraq, but there had been no follow-up action. He said that Turkey was ready to agree to begin work on two more gates in 2006, which could then open in 2007. Turkey is also examining the possibility of direct rail links.

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